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Food Grain, Oil Crop Acreages Up; Feed Grains Down

FARMERS intend to plant a larger total acreage of principal crops, according to their March reports, than in either of the last 2 years. This year's acreage may approach 358 million acres, compared with 355½ million last year and an average of 355 million acres for the previous 10 years. The prospective acreage for 16 major crops, however, is about 1 percent below the goals.

Shifts between crops are significant. Much of these are due to the near-record acreage of winter wheat sown last fall which is still doing well, and to the demand for flaxseed and soybeans. These tend to limit the acreage available for sorghums, corn, oats, and some others. Barley and durum wheat appear to be gaining favor at the expense of other spring wheat. Sugar beets, beans, and peas are replacing potatoes in many areas. Furthermore, most farmers were able to get much work done last fall, and are in good shape to start spring work.

The spring season was progressing about normally. Soil moisture was mostly satisfactory, except in the extreme Southwest. The fairly severe winter in the South prevented too-

early budding of fruit trees and helped reduce insect hazard to crops. Farmers were planning to take advantage of what they regarded as favorable price prospects.

Production prospects at mid-March were generally good. In making plans for 1947 farmers have not had some of the problems of wartime to cope with. The labor and equipment situations have eased up, and the need for producing livestock feeds has lessened somewhat. Farmers are giving more thought to rotations that would lighten the burden on their crop land. But operating costs are high and farmers have to consider their income possibilities from all competing crops. Weather and soil moisture are the chief other factors that will affect the aims of producers.

Feed grains will be grown on 4.4 million acres less than in 1946 if present plans materialize, a decline of 2.7 percent. The prospective declines are 2.7 percent in the corn acreage, 0.9 percent for oats and 11.1 percent in all sorghums. Barley alone showed an increase of 1.0 percent in acreage to be planted. However, the number of grain-consuming animal units esti-

1947 Planting Intentions, With Comparisons

	Planted acreage		
	1946 actual	1947 goal	1947 intentions
	<i>Thou-</i>	<i>Thou-</i>	<i>Thou-</i>
	<i>sands</i>	<i>sands</i>	<i>sands</i>
Corn, all.....	90, 027	91, 550	87, 599
Wheat, all.....	71, 510	70, 700	75, 706
Winter.....	52, 206		¹ 56, 426
Spring.....	19, 304		19, 280
Oats.....	47, 048	44, 669	46, 620
Barley.....	11, 594	13, 084	11, 714
Flaxseed.....	2, 639	5, 000	4, 488
Rice.....	1, 584	1, 520	1, 619
Sorghums, all ²	14, 753		13, 109
Sorghums, all (excluding sirup).....	14, 574	16, 000	³ 12, 930
Potatoes.....	2, 625	2, 517	2, 310
Sweetpotatoes.....	685	803	664
Tobacco ⁴	1, 938	1, 967	1, 908
Dry beans.....	1, 099	2, 150	1, 889
Dry peas.....	538	478	589
Soybeans for beans.....	11, 494		12, 213
Soybeans for beans ⁴	9, 606	11, 244	⁵ 10, 093
Peanuts, grown alone ²	3, 949		3, 847
Peanuts, picked and threshed ⁴	3, 168	2, 839	⁶ 3, 117
Tame hay, all ⁴	74, 352	75, 130	74, 337
Sugar beets.....	906	1, 069	993

¹ BAE Winter Wheat and Rye Report of Dec. 19, 1946.

² For all purposes.

³ All sorghum acreage less 1946 acreage harvested for sirup, by States.

⁴ Harvested acreage.

⁵ 1946 indicated solid equivalent acreage adjusted for the percentage harvested for beans.

⁶ Assuming the usual relationship of acreages planted alone to acreages for picking and threshing, by States.

⁷ Goal acreage for tame hay adjusted to the all hay level by addition of 1946 wild hay acreage in 22 States where estimated.

mated on January 1, 1947 was 5.9 percent less than a year before.

The increase in winter wheat acreage virtually offsets the total decline in all feed grains. The near-record winter wheat acreage is bolstered by a prospective spring wheat acreage almost identical with that planted in 1946. The all wheat total exceeds that of 1946 by 4.2 million acres or 6 percent. Under current favorable condi-

tions, wheat production could easily equal or exceed that of 1946. The acreage of rye planted last fall was 5 percent above the previous season. Rice acreage is expected to set a new record of above 1.6 million acres. As a whole, the acreage of food grains may be 4.4 million acres or nearly 6 percent above that planted for the 1946 crop.

Intended acreage of oilseeds as a group, while not up to the goal, are showing a big increase over last year. Soybeans grown alone are expected to increase 6 percent and flaxseed, 70 percent. But peanuts grown alone may fall off 2.6 percent. With usual conditions during the growing season and plantings as now indicated, the acreage of soybeans for beans may be 5 percent more than in 1946 and the acreage of peanuts picked and threshed may be 1.6 percent less.

Hay acreage is expected to be about the same as last year. Tobacco acreage, limited by allotments, is down 1.5 percent. Potatoes are down 12 percent. Sweetpotatoes may be down 3 percent and cowpeas down 8 percent; but dry beans may be up 11 percent, dry peas 9 percent and sugar beets up 10 percent, compared with the acreage planted in 1946.

In only a few States is the total acreage expected to differ very much from that planted or grown in 1946. Chief exceptions are Arizona and New Mexico. Inadequate soil moisture and irrigation water supplies in Arizona probably will mean a 5 percent decline in the total acreage planted there. In contrast, fall rains in New Mexico made possible heavy seedings of wheat and will probably result in a fifth more total acres planted this season.

R. K. SMITH

Bureau of Agricultural Economics

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★ Big Backlog of Farm Construction

ONLY a third of the houses that farmers live in are in fair to good shape today. Another third need a lot of repair work. The other third are so far gone that fixing them up would cost more than they are worth. Furthermore, these figures are based on the 1940 census. They do not tell the full story now, for many home repairs had to be skipped during the war.

Farm houses on the average are in poorer repair than houses in towns, and fall farther short of needs. Possibly two-thirds of all farm houses would have to be enlarged, repaired or even replaced before all farm families could have the kind of housing that middle-income city people take for granted.

Poor upkeep of farm houses is an old story. After the first World War, many farmers had to meet big mortgage debts and at the same time had to spend money on machinery and other costly items. And when the depression hit in the thirties, farmers could ill afford to pay out money for home building and repairs. Then, when farm incomes rose in the second war, building materials were hard to get. Skilled labor was scarce. And the farmers themselves had little time to do repair work or building. So today, after at least a quarter of a century of poor upkeep and little new building, an enormous amount of construction and repairs is needed to bring farm building up to modern standards.

Lumber is the biggest item used in farm buildings. Forestry men say farm construction and repairs would have to use 6 to 6.5 billion board feet of lumber a year for farm buildings to hold their own. But in only 4 of the past 19 years has enough been used. In 1945 the 2.4 billion board feet used on farms was less than in 1932, the blackest year of the depression. Last year, with lumber and materials still short, only 4.1 billion board feet were used on farms. Even this year, farmers will use only about 4.9 billion board feet. All these figures suggest how big is the backlog of farm building needs.

No one knows how much farm home construction work has been done since 1940. However, there are some useful clues. Farmers since 1940 have used up

lumber at about the same rate as in the thirties. In that period the average increase in houses was about 126,000 farm homes a year. Assuming this rate of new construction, then the number of new houses added in the first 7 years of the forties would be around 125,000 a year. Another clue comes from the 8-month period from mid-April to mid-December in 1946 when rather detailed records were kept. About 76,000 farm houses were authorized to be built on farms.

Such clues suggest that perhaps 800,000 to 875,000 farm houses, at the most, could have been built since 1940. However, maintenance was more important than new construction during the war years. In any event the rate of new construction during the past seven years has been lower than for the preceding five years. In 1935-40 the average increase exceeded 138,000 farm dwellings a year.

But there is a bright side to the picture. Compared to the situation in cities, the farm housing shortage is not acute. About 5,000,000 people left farms during the war. Between April 1940 and November 1945 some 800,000 farm houses were vacated. This made it possible to get for many of the remaining farm families better dwellings with less crowding. For example, the number of farm houses that had more than 1½ persons per room dropped from 16 percent of the total of occupied houses in 1940 to only 11 percent in 1945. The 1945 figure is not entirely comparable with that of 1940, but does show the direction of change.

Of course, the return of war workers and veterans to farms in the last year or so has filled up some of the vacancies since November 1945. But farm families still have a wider choice in housing than before the war. And their choice has probably been wider in the poorer farm districts than in the others.

Another bright spot in the farm housing picture has been the advance of rural electrification, even during the war. Between April 1940 and November 1945 more than a million more farms got electric power. Over half of the Nation's 5.8 million farms now have

electricity, compared with only a third in 1940 and a seventh in 1930. Before 1935, more farmers had running water in their houses than had electricity. But by 1945 a great many more houses with electric power had running water than did the houses without electricity. The fact is that electricity, itself a convenience and timesaver, often opens the way for other facilities. Many elec-

trified farms have put in a number of conveniences such as bath, toilet facilities, and central heat.

In the main, however, farm housing is not up to modern standards. Too many farm people still live in houses too poor for health and work efficiency.

ROY J. BURROUGHS
and J. C. ELLICKSON

Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Cigarettes—Biggest Tobacco User

THE trillion-and-half cigarettes made in this country in the past 5 years would, if placed end to end, girdle the earth about 2,500 times. That's a lot of cigarettes—and a lot of market for tobacco farmers.

Cigarette production in the past five years was two-thirds more than in the years 1937-41, and triple the 1925-29 output. It has climbed steadily since 1900. The climb slowed a little in the early thirties, but output since then has kept on topping the year before.

Although cigarette output during the war was far ahead of any previous period, the demand at wartime prices outstripped supplies. Worry and tensions brought on by war played an important part in greatly swelling the number of cigarettes consumed. A considerable number of new smokers were added during the war. Overseas forces took over a fifth of the total output. Besides those the armed forces smoked themselves, they used large quantities for trading and sharing with foreigners.

With the war over, more domestic use has largely offset the slump in the total going overseas. High consumer income since the war is helping keep up cigarette consumption. In addition, commercial exports last year were several times more than in any other year.

Because cigarettes take about 70 percent of the tobacco used in the United States, the sharp gain in cigarette smoking in recent years has meant hundreds of millions of dollars to tobacco farmers. The total 1945 tobacco crop brought farmers about 950 million dollars. But the tobacco types used in making cigarettes—flue-

cured, burley, and Maryland—accounted for the bulk of it, 850 million dollars.

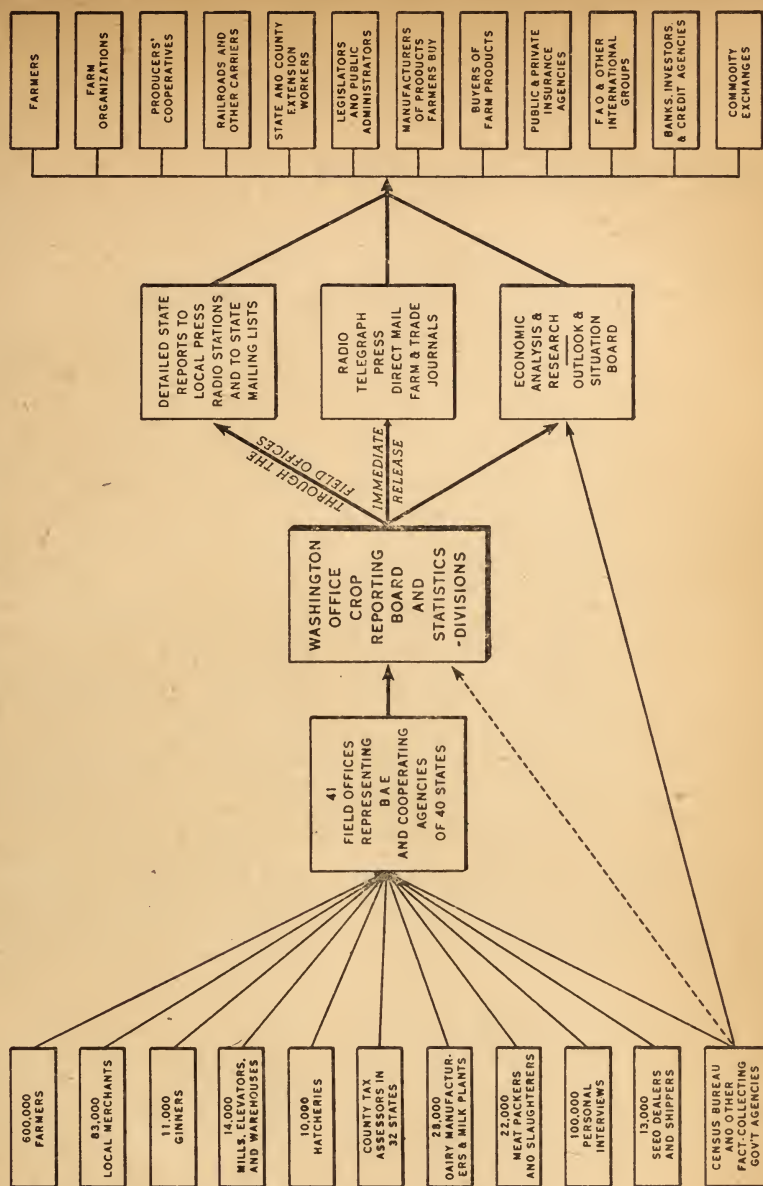
And equally important is the steady influence of cigarette consumption on tobacco production. The average domestic cigarette is usually about half flue-cured, a third burley, nearly 4 percent Maryland, and about a tenth imported Oriental tobaccos. Average acreage of flue-cured tobacco in the last 3 years has been over a million acres, burley about a half-million acres, and Maryland about 42,000 acres. The acreage of each type was about 50 percent more than in the early twenties. But more important, these types today account for about 90 percent of the total tobacco acreage compared to only two-thirds in 1920-24.

Production of cigarette types of tobacco has gone up much more than the acreages, because of the much higher yields. Annual flue-cured production in the past 3 years has been 1½ times more than in 1920-24, and burley more than doubled. But cigarette production has been 4½ times more. This has been possible because of shifts in use of these tobacco types away from chewing tobacco and, to a lesser extent, from smoking tobacco.

Cigarette consumption is expected to continue growing. Further expansion, both at home and abroad, is in prospect. American blended cigarettes are becoming more popular in many foreign countries. Increased consumption in these countries is apt to provide additional export outlets for American tobacco.

ARTHUR G. CONOVER
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AGRICULTURAL ESTIMATES OF THE BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS FROM SOURCES TO USERS



The facts supplied by crop reporters, combined with information from other sources, are the basis for about 500 reports each year for the use of all farmers and people who serve farmers. These reports guide decisions on the distribution of railroad cars, sales of farm machinery, trade with foreign countries, and on business operations on farms or affecting farmers.

By giving to individual farmers over-all information about the whole agricultural industry, this service helps put farmers on an equal trading basis with the people who buy farm products or sell to farmers.

1947 Fruit Production Prospects Above Average

FRUIT growers this year will probably turn out only a little less deciduous fruit than last year's high record. And the citrus crop that goes to market this coming season should be about as large as this season's record. This is the outlook if weather is about average.

The strong demand for fruit has had a big part in getting record and near-record turn-outs of fruits in recent years. Growers have taken very good care of their orchards. They have done more pruning, spraying, and fertilizing than in almost any other period. And these benefits build up from year to year. It took more than good weather to bring in average or larger crops of all major fruits in 1946. New production records were set for oranges, peaches, pears, plums, and cherries.

Good orchard care is likely to continue in 1947, though weather and prices may not be quite as favorable as in the past few years.

In California, where two-fifths of the country's fruit tonnage comes from, production prospects for both citrus and deciduous fruit were good in mid-March. Orchard work was well advanced. Enough labor was expected to be available. Supplies of fertilizer and containers should be as adequate or better than last year. Similar favorable conditions existed in most other fruit areas. East of the Rockies, cold February and March weather held back fruit buds, reducing late frost danger.

Apples

During the past 25 years apple production has shifted steadily away from the East and Midwest to more stable producing areas in the West. Today two-fifths of the Nation's apples come from the West compared to only a third in the early twenties. In an average year a fourth of the crop comes from Washington. But production uncertainties in the eastern areas still have considerable effect on the total crop. Two threats are late spring frosts and poor weather for pollinating. In addition there is a tendency toward big crops in alternate years.

Last year, however, none of the major producing areas had very large

or very small crops. So the 1947 prospects for the leading deciduous fruit, second only to oranges in output, is another crop about average in size.

Peaches

Increased plantings of peach trees in the late thirties and early forties, combined with good care and the keeping of old trees, mean that the Nation's peach orchards now have the largest bearing capacity in history. The effect of increased plantings is especially noticeable in Michigan, South Carolina, and California. Two-fifths of the Nation's peaches, including the bulk of those harvested for processing, have come from California in recent years. Peach production has increased sharply in the last few years.

The record 1946 crop of 84 million bushels was half again larger than the 1935-39 average. And even though lower prices probably would result in poorer care of orchards and removal of many of the less productive trees, the capacity of orchards in the years ahead will stay larger than in the thirties. Freezing weather could kill many trees and neglect of orchards could be fairly general. However, these things are not likely to cut down production much in the next few years.

The historic year-to-year pattern of alternately large and small crops in the East and Midwest suggests a slightly smaller United States crop than the record one of 1946 but well above average.

Grapes

Grapes are second to apples in deciduous fruit tonnage, with over nine-tenths of the crop coming from California. The bulk of the crop is processed. During the war about two-fifths of crop was dried for raisins, a third made into wine, a fifth used fresh, and a twentieth made into jellies and juices. The last few years have seen a moderate increase in plantings in California, Washington and several eastern grape areas. Vineyard care has been excellent, with 1946 yields nearly a fifth above those of the late thirties. Mid-March conditions

point to a large crop in 1947, but probably a little smaller than last year's.

Pears

Because growing conditions for pears are better in the West than in the East, three-fourths of the crop comes from California, Oregon and Washington. Pear orchards have received excellent care in recent years, with production sharply upward. United States pear production does not vary widely from year to year. The record 1945 crop was followed by an even larger one in 1946. Unusually favorable weather helped in those years. Although bearing surface this year will be slightly larger than in 1946 or 1945, growing conditions can hardly be expected to be as good. Thus the prospect is for production to be somewhat smaller than in the past 2 years.

Cherries

Sour cherry production set a new record in 1946, mainly the result of unusually favorable weather in Michigan and Wisconsin which produced over two-thirds of the crop. Sour cherries have tended to follow the pattern of alternately large and small crops. With the bulk of the crop coming from the Lake States, much depends on whether there are late killing frosts. But prospects in mid-March were for an average or slightly below average crop.

Sweet cherry production is centered in the Western States where year-to-year variations in crop size are much less than for sour cherries. Four-fifths of the crop comes from the three West Coast States. Excellent growing conditions generally throughout the 11 producing States resulted in the largest crop on record last year. An average crop or slightly better appears to be in prospect for 1947.

Citrus

California citrus groves are in good condition, with next season's crops apt to be as large as they were this season. But Florida's groves were given a setback by hurricanes, dryness and freezes this season. Though it is too early to judge the effect of this damage on production in the coming season, it seems likely that the sharp upward trend in

Florida production will be temporarily checked.

In Texas there were no unfavorable factors by mid-March for 1947-48 citrus marketings, even though a cold February delayed the bloom. In this State the grapefruit bearing surface is increasing moderately and that for oranges is going up sharply. These conditions suggest larger crops next winter.

For the country as a whole, mid-March conditions point toward a citrus crop for the year starting this fall about as large as for this season.

CARY D. PALMER

Bureau of Agricultural Economics

Sugar

FAVORABLE prices along with eased labor and machinery supplies have encouraged sugar beet growers to plant the largest acreage since 1942. If their March intentions are carried out, they will plant nearly a million acres in sugar beets. If the out-turn is average, about 1.7 million tons of raw sugar would be produced. This sugar will not be consumed until 1948.

In the 1946-47 crop year, total sugar production in the United States and offshore areas supplying this country may reach 9.6 million tons compared to the prewar average of 8.3 million. Cuban sugar is expected to be well above 5.5 million tons, compared with the prewar average of 3.2 million. In contrast, Philippine production is only about 200,000 tons—less than a fifth of prewar. Production in both Hawaii and Puerto Rico is well above last season. Domestic production was around 2 million tons, and well above recent years.

Three of the chief exporting countries—Java, Formosa, and the Philippines—will add less than a half million tons to world supplies this season. Before the war, they shipped out about 3.8 million tons a year. Moreover, the Philippines will import sugar this year. These countries won't get back to their prewar output for several years.

Although European sugar production this season will be about a third more than last, it is still much below prewar. To help make up the deficit, Europe will

get about a fourth of the Cuban production, about the same as before the war.

Recent world sugar allocations by the International Emergency Food Council ups the amount for the United States for 1947. This country gets 6.8

million tons, 1.2 million more than last year. Consequently consumers will get about a fifth more sugar than in either 1945 or 1946. The household ration in the second quarter will be 10 pounds per person, compared to 5 pounds in the first quarter.

Iowa Leads in Receipts From Livestock, California in Crops

Rank of States in 1946 Cash Receipts from Livestock and Crops

[000 omitted]

Livestock		Crops	
State	Amount	State	Amount
Iowa.....	\$1, 493, 966	California.....	\$1, 336, 469
Illinois.....	859, 074	Texas.....	710, 508
Minnesota.....	790, 725	North Carolina.....	610, 479
Wisconsin.....	787, 963	Illinois.....	539, 932
Missouri.....	651, 549	Kansas.....	407, 353
Texas.....	645, 241	Washington.....	362, 656
California.....	591, 415	North Dakota.....	354, 082
Nebraska.....	580, 864	Florida.....	328, 918
Ohio.....	562, 197	Arkansas.....	328, 772
Indiana.....	548, 554	Nebraska.....	318, 846
Kansas.....	483, 521	Georgia.....	306, 985
New York.....	470, 611	Iowa.....	299, 781
Pennsylvania.....	435, 234	South Carolina.....	260, 024
Michigan.....	388, 324	Mississippi.....	258, 871
South Dakota.....	343, 743	Ohio.....	240, 242
Oklahoma.....	280, 829	Tennessee.....	240, 131
Colorado.....	223, 556	Minnesota.....	234, 925
Kentucky.....	209, 597	Indiana.....	229, 477
North Dakota.....	187, 296	Alabama.....	223, 331
Washington.....	176, 858	Oklahoma.....	218, 080
Tennessee.....	173, 496	New York.....	211, 286
Virginia.....	161, 107	Kentucky.....	207, 424
Montana.....	155, 268	Michigan.....	204, 415
Oregon.....	144, 754	South Dakota.....	201, 427
Idaho.....	125, 442	Virginia.....	189, 259
Arkansas.....	121, 790	Missouri.....	187, 238
Georgia.....	115, 931	Colorado.....	176, 587
New Jersey.....	111, 270	Oregon.....	172, 684
Maryland.....	109, 246	Louisiana.....	172, 455
Massachusetts.....	105, 457	Pennsylvania.....	160, 985
North Carolina.....	104, 396	Idaho.....	153, 185
Wyoming.....	92, 621	Montana.....	136, 028
New Mexico.....	91, 446	Arizona.....	102, 863
Mississippi.....	88, 313	Wisconsin.....	93, 010
Utah.....	87, 644	New Jersey.....	85, 059
Alabama.....	86, 995	Maine.....	81, 422
Vermont.....	76, 652	Maryland.....	68, 205
Louisiana.....	73, 033	Massachusetts.....	58, 290
Connecticut.....	72, 921	New Mexico.....	48, 477
Florida.....	72, 831	Connecticut.....	38, 992
Delaware.....	69, 488	Utah.....	36, 311
West Virginia.....	64, 457	Wyoming.....	27, 752
Arizona.....	56, 070	West Virginia.....	25, 015
Maine.....	54, 222	Delaware.....	14, 898
South Carolina.....	41, 489	Vermont.....	9, 409
New Hampshire.....	36, 862	New Hampshire.....	8, 063
Nevada.....	26, 315	Rhode Island.....	5, 239
Rhode Island.....	12, 786	Nevada.....	4, 576
United States.....	13, 243, 419	United States.....	10, 690, 446

1946 Cash Receipts by States

IOWA farmers last year produced more corn than in any other State—marketed most of it as hogs, as fed cattle, as calves, as butter, as eggs, and as chickens. Iowa led in the marketings of these products—and at good prices. This put her at the top of the list in cash receipts from livestock and livestock products.

True, Texas has more beef cattle than any other State. But they are mostly range cattle and don't bring as high prices as fed cattle. Iowa's big corn supplies brought cattle from all over the range country for fattening.

Illinois ranked second for much the same reason that put Iowa first. Minnesota ranked third in livestock receipts chiefly because she led in turkeys, ran Iowa a close second in butter and was not far from the top in hogs.

Name almost any crop and it is probably raised in California. She was first in the marketings of barley, hay, oranges, lemons, peaches, pears, grapes, cherries, apricots, prunes, truck crops, dry beans, walnuts, and several miscellaneous crops such as olives and figs. California led all other States in cash receipts from crops in 1946.

Texas ranked second in total crop receipts. She led in grain sorghum marketings, was second in rice and grapefruit, was third in truck crops, and was near the top in wheat, peanuts, peaches, sweetpotatoes, and pecans.

Tobacco marketings put North Carolina in third place in crop receipts. But being near the top in peanut and cotton marketings also helped.

Down, Down, Down

WHILE the production of nearly every farm crop went steadily upward during the war, maple sirup production went steadily downward except for a slight upturn in 1942. In fact, the trend in maple sirup production has been downward for 30 years or more. Production of maple sirup (including that made into maple sugar) in 1946 was about 4 million gallons. The average output at the high point in 1916-20 was around 77½ million gallons, almost 20 times last year's production.

But there is a bright side. Prices farmers received in 1946 for these products were at phenomenal highs. Maple sirup at ceiling prices brought them about \$3.30 a gallon, double those of the first war period. Maple sugar brought around 70 cents a pound last year compared with about 25 cents in 1916-20. So the total value of the 1946 crop was about 4.7 million dollars compared to 7.8 million for the 1916-20 average.

Though one of the few original sources of sugar in Colonial times, much of which was obtained from the Indians, commercial production of maple sirup is now confined to 10 States in the Northeast and on the Great Lakes. Vermont and New York are the leading producers, with Ohio and Michigan next. The 8 million trees tapped in these 10 States were just about half the number tapped in the first war period.

Maple sirup production is one of the most temperamental of farm enterprises. To get a good flow of sap at tapping time the weather has to be just right—well above freezing in the daytime and well below at night. Too much snow in the sugar bush makes it difficult to gather the sap. It takes from 30 to 45 gallons of sap to make a gallon of sirup. And further boiling of a gallon of sirup produces about 8 pounds of sugar. All this gathering and cooking process requires a good deal of labor. The sap runs from a few days to about a month and begins in March. Unusually early spring weather almost invariably means low production.

With high labor costs, many farmers have had to give up their maple sirup operations in recent years. Many sugar bushes have been abandoned. Others have been sold for the lumber, a result of the strong demand at good prices for maple lumber, for flooring, mine props, furniture, and many other uses.

Whether maple sirup will one day become a thing of the past no one knows. If such a calamity should happen many a hot cake and waffle just wouldn't taste the same. So to thousands of Americans this would mean a loud vote to continue maple sirup production.

Popcorn Dollars

THE dimes and quarters spent for popcorn by millions of Americans, at carnivals, circuses, the movies, and at stores add up to millions of dollars for farmers who raise popcorn. In 1945, the popcorn crop brought farmers over \$16,000,000, the all-time high. In 1946, the next best year, the farm value was around \$9,000,000.

Popcorn production during the war probably increased, more, percentage-wise, than any other field crop. From 1912 to 1940 production ranged from 5 million to a little over 100 million pounds. Since then it has been from 125 million to well over 400 million pounds. The 1945 output of nearly 435 million pounds was the record and the 1946 output of 267 million pounds was second.

Though some popcorn is raised in nearly every State, commercial pro-

duction is limited to about 12 States. And like its big brother, popcorn can be considered a Corn Belt crop where normally about 80 percent of the commercial crop is produced. Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio are the leading producers, though Maryland, Oklahoma, Texas, and Idaho have been raising more and more in recent years. But Iowa is still tops. Last year she produced a third of the crop.

Great strides have been made recently in breeding better popcorn, with better "popability." Several experiment stations have developed hybrids that pop bigger kernels as well as yield more per acre. Best moisture content for popping is 13 to 14 percent. To get this, popcorn is picked at just the right time, largely with corn pickers. It is then stored and fumigated before being ready for use.

Popcorn was raised by the Indians long before Columbus arrived in the

Prices of Farm Products

[Estimates of average prices received by farmers at local farm markets based on reports to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Average of reports covering the United States weighted according to relative importance of district and State]

Commodity	5-year average		Mar. 15, 1946	Feb. 15, 1947	Mar. 15, 1947	Parity Price Mar. 15, 1947
	August 1909-July 1914	January 1935-December 1939				
Wheat (bushel).....dollars..	6.884	0.837	1.58	1.99	2.44	2.02
Rye (bushel).....do.....	.720	.554	1.75	2.33	2.81	1.65
Rice (bushel).....do.....	.813	.742	1.84	2.33	2.36	1.86
Corn (bushel).....do.....	.642	.691	1.14	1.23	1.50	1.47
Oats (bushel).....do.....	.399	.340	.751	.797	.890	.914
Barley (bushel).....do.....	.619	.533	1.14	1.33	1.44	1.42
Sorghum, grain (100-pound).....do.....	1.21	1.17	2.32	2.15	2.57	2.77
Hay (tons).....do.....	11.87	8.87	15.50	17.50	17.40	27.20
Cotton (pound).....cents.....	12.4	10.34	22.70	30.56	31.89	28.40
Soybeans (bushel).....dollars..	2.96	.954	2.12	3.00	3.67	32.20
Peanuts (pound).....cents.....	4.8	3.55	18.64	9.05	9.91	11.0
Flaxseed (bushel).....dollars..	1.69	1.69	2.89	6.96	8.16	3.87
Potatoes (bushel).....do.....	.697	.717	1.58	1.31	1.39	1.70
Sweetpotatoes (bushel).....do.....	.873	.807	2.36	2.28	2.35	2.01
Apples (bushel).....do.....	.96	.90	13.69	2.78	2.93	2.20
Oranges on tree (box).....do.....	2.23	1.11	2.21	.92	1.36	3.48
Hogs (hundredweight).....do.....	7.27	8.38	13.10	23.80	26.40	16.60
Beef cattle (hundredweight).....do.....	5.42	6.56	13.10	17.30	18.50	12.40
Veal calves (hundredweight).....do.....	6.75	7.80	13.90	19.20	20.20	15.50
Lambs (hundredweight).....do.....	5.88	7.79	13.70	19.40	20.00	13.50
Butterfat (pound) ¹cents.....	26.3	29.1	151.8	67.8	73.5	61.1
Milk, wholesale (100 pound) ²dollars..	1.60	1.81	13.31	14.48	14.34	13.60
Chickens (pound).....cents.....	11.4	14.9	23.3	25.3	26.6	26.1
Eggs (dozen).....do.....	21.5	21.7	32.1	38.6	40.1	441.8
Wool (pound).....do.....	18.3	23.8	41.4	40.3	40.5	41.9

¹ Revised.

² Comparable base price, August 1909-July 1914.

³ Comparable price computed under sec. 3 (b) Price Control Act.

⁴ 1919-28 average for computing parity price.

⁵ Does not include dairy production payments made directly to farmers by county PMA offices October 1943 to June 1946.

⁶ Adjusted for seasonality.

Western Hemisphere. And though the colonists grew it, popcorn did not become an important commercial crop till about 1880. Since then production has grown steadily. Big demand by both soldiers and civilians during the

past few years has encouraged farmers to plant more acres in popcorn than ever before. Today people are using more popcorn than ever before.

CHARLES E. BURKHEAD

Bureau of Agricultural Economics

OUR EATING HABITS BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

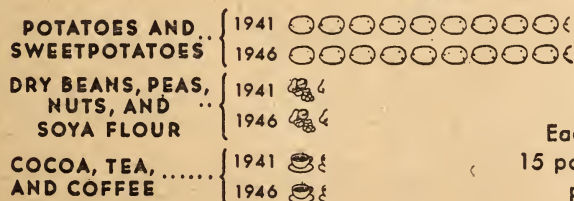
MORE



LESS



SAME



Each symbol represents
15 pounds (quarts for dairy)
per capita per year

*MILK EQUIVALENT IN TERMS OF PROTEIN AND MINERAL CONTENT

Δ EXCLUDING FAT PORK CUTS

Economic Trends Affecting Agriculture

Year and month	Indus- trial pro- duction (1935-39 = 100) ¹	Income of in- dus- trial workers (1935-39 = 100) ²	1910-14=100				Index of prices received by farm- ers (August 1909-July 1914= 100)			
			Whole- sale prices of all com- mod- ities ³	Prices paid by farmers		Farm wage rates ⁴	Livestock and products			
				Com- mod- ities	Com- modities, interest, and taxes		Dairy prod- ucts	Poul- try and eggs	Meat ani- mals	All live- stock
1910-14 average.....	58	50	100	100	100	100	100	101	101	101
1915-19 average.....	72	90	158	151	150	148	148	154	163	158
1920-24 average.....	75	122	160	161	173	178	159	163	123	142
1925-29 average.....	98	129	143	155	168	179	160	155	148	154
1930-34 average.....	74	78	107	122	135	115	105	94	85	93
1935-39 average.....	100	100	118	125	128	118	119	109	119	117
1940-44 average.....	192	234	139	150	148	212	162	146	171	164
1945 average.....	203	286	154	180	174	350	197	196	210	203
1946 average.....	170	264	177	203	194	378	242	198	256	240
1946										
March.....	168	238	159	187	180	-----	201	167	219	203
April.....	165	247	161	188	181	362	199	166	225	205
May.....	159	248	162	192	185	-----	198	173	226	207
June.....	171	264	165	196	188	-----	207	178	230	213
July.....	172	268	182	209	199	378	245	196	268	247
August.....	177	285	188	214	204	-----	257	199	294	263
September.....	180	287	181	210	200	-----	271	221	249	250
October.....	181	288	196	218	207	378	300	257	318	299
November.....	182	294	204	224	212	-----	307	230	313	294
December.....	181	300	206	225	213	-----	312	226	311	294
1947										
January.....	188	301	207	227	215	399	292	201	306	281
February.....	188	-----	211	234	221	-----	270	192	319	278
March.....	-----	-----	-----	243	229	-----	269	199	345	292

Year and month	Index of prices received by farmers (August 1909-July 1914=100)								Parity ratio ⁵	
	Crops							All crops and live stock		
	Food grains	Feed grains and hay	To-bacco	Cotton	Oil-bearing crops	Fruit	Truck crops			All crops
1910-14 average.....	100	101	102	96	98	99	-----	99	100	100
1915-19 average.....	193	164	187	168	187	125	-----	168	162	106
1920-24 average.....	147	126	192	189	149	148	743	160	151	86
1925-29 average.....	140	119	172	145	129	141	140	143	149	89
1930-34 average.....	70	76	119	74	72	94	106	86	90	66
1935-39 average.....	94	95	175	83	106	83	102	97	107	84
1940-44 average.....	123	119	245	131	159	133	172	143	154	103
1945 average.....	172	161	366	171	215	220	224	201	202	116
1946 average.....	201	195	382	228	244	226	204	226	233	120
1946										
March.....	185	171	367	183	208	229	283	215	209	116
April.....	185	171	368	190	210	244	282	220	212	117
May.....	193	188	369	194	214	248	177	215	211	114
June.....	200	195	370	210	219	261	185	223	218	116
July.....	215	244	369	249	242	249	163	240	244	123
August.....	203	225	388	271	242	203	162	233	249	122
September.....	207	221	396	285	236	210	154	236	243	122
October.....	218	222	410	304	255	208	151	244	273	132
November.....	220	187	399	236	342	186	207	230	263	124
December.....	224	186	406	242	334	211	166	232	264	124
1947										
January.....	223	184	399	240	336	196	238	236	260	121
February.....	235	185	390	246	334	203	275	245	262	119
March.....	283	212	390	257	360	215	299	266	280	122

¹ Federal Reserve Board; represents output of mining and manufacturing; monthly data adjusted for seasonal variation.

² Computed from data furnished by Bureau of Labor Statistics and Interstate Commerce Commission on pay rolls in mining, manufacturing, and transportation; monthly data adjusted for seasonal variation. Revised May 1946.

³ Bureau of Labor Statistics.

⁴ Monthly data adjusted for seasonal variation.

⁵ Ratio of prices received to prices paid for commodities, interest, and taxes.

⁶ Revised.

⁷ 1924 only.

Livestock

LIVESTOCK men can count on a strong demand for meat at least until mid-year. This means that livestock prices will hold up well for the next several weeks. This is the outlook now, though meat production this year will be well above last year. Prices generally are apt to drop a bit this fall as marketings increase—and they might go down more than “a bit” if business activity and consumer incomes fall off very much.

Marketings of last fall's pig crop during the April-to-June marketing peak will be of pretty good size. Even so, the average price farmers get for their hogs during this quarter should continue over \$20. Despite the recent upturns in feed prices, favorable hog prices are encouraging farmers to feed their hogs well for slaughter next fall and winter.

Prices for better grade slaughter cattle probably will turn downward this spring and summer as marketings increase seasonally. Prices of stocker and feeder cattle may also go down this summer, but not as much as prices for the better slaughter cattle. Despite this, feeding margins will stay unusually favorable.

With this year's lamb crop the small-

est in 20 years, lamb prices will not drop as much seasonally as usual when the new lamb crop moves to market in volume after May. The early spring lamb crop is 7 percent below last year's small crop.

Wheat

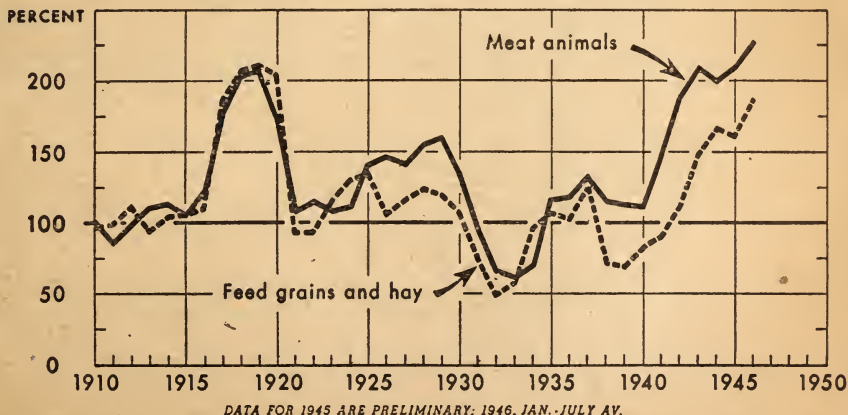
FARMERS this year are quite likely to come up with the biggest wheat crop in history. It may go to 1.2 billion bushels, 5 percent more than last year's record. The winter crop may run close to 950 million bushels. If plantings and yields turn out as expected, the spring crop would be about 265 million bushels.

Wheat exports for this crop year are expected to be around 350 million bushels, of which 236 million bushels had been exported by March 1 (compared to 262 million for the same period a year earlier). United States exports for the 1947-48 season are expected to continue large. If they are, the July 1948 carryover would again be well below the prewar average of 235 million bushels. The United States shipped about 725,000,000 bushels of wheat abroad from October 1944 to March 1947.

Wheat prices advanced steadily from

PRICES RECEIVED BY FARMERS FOR MEAT ANIMALS AND FOR FEED GRAINS AND HAY, UNITED STATES, 1910-46

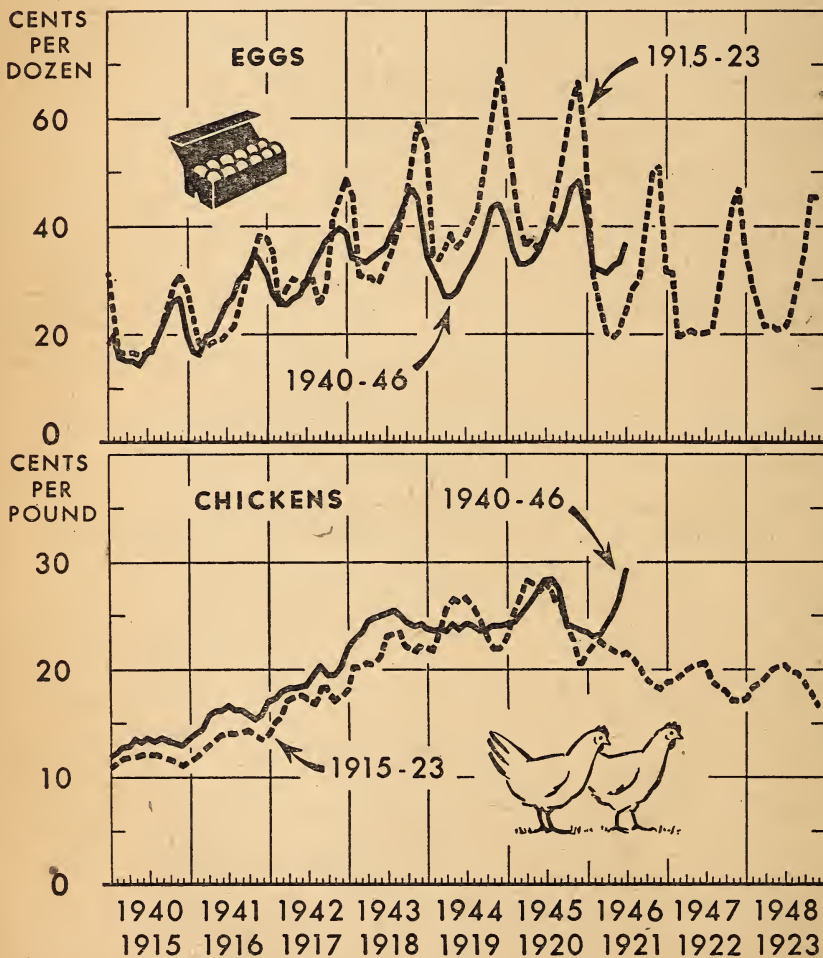
INDEX NUMBERS (AUG. 1909 - JULY 1914 = 100)



late January to late March. Sharpest advances came in mid-March when short traders had difficulty in covering. With prospects that the carry-over of

old wheat will be almost as small as last year, prices are expected to remain high at least until the winter crop comes to market in volume.

EGGS AND CHICKENS: PRICES RECEIVED BY FARMERS, UNITED STATES, 1915-23 AND 1940-46



Farm Labor

THE farm labor picture is better than last year, largely because of some increase in farm workers and more farm machinery. However, dairy hands and other skilled labor will continue to be scarce. And in some areas farmers may not be able to hire all the workers they want during harvest.

Shifts from a year ago in crop acreages based on March planting intentions may result in some decrease in demand for farm workers in some areas but increases in others. An increase of 70 percent in the acreage of flaxseed at the expense of spring grains should spread the need for harvest labor over a longer period in some States. A sizeable decrease in the acreage of burley tobacco will ease the need for labor in Kentucky and Tennessee. Sharp decreases in potato acreages are largely offset by increases in the acreage of dry beans and peas and sugar beets. Sugar beet labor is, however, usually different from that used for potatoes. A near-record acreage of wheat will boost the demand for harvest hands in the winter wheat belt.

Production of farm machinery and equipment is beginning to catch up

with demand. In many lines dealers now have stocks available for immediate delivery. Only tractors and pick-up balers and other heavy machinery are expected to continue short of demand.

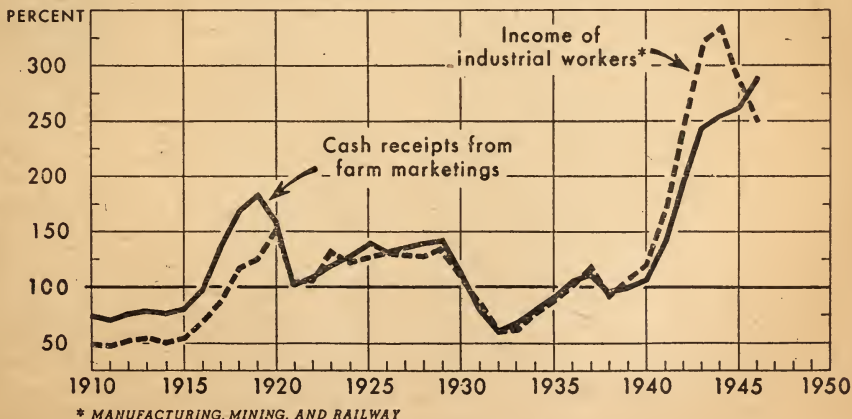
Wage rates will probably remain at about their present level during at least the first half of the year and as long as farm income and industrial wages remain steady. Demand for hired workers may not be greatly affected by wage rates. High wages usually discourage the use of hired workers but good farm income tends to offset this.

Farmers Got and Paid More

FARMERS who still had 1946 spring pigs sent them to market in mid-March at record prices. Farmers got an average of \$26.40 for their hogs, a new peak and a jump of \$2.60 above the previous high in mid-February. At the same time the extraordinary demand for wheat—for use both at home and abroad—along with some transportation and trading troubles—skyrocketed wheat prices within 12 cents of the all-time record in June 1920. The average price farmers got in mid-March was

CASH RECEIPTS FROM FARM MARKETINGS, AND INCOME OF INDUSTRIAL WORKERS, UNITED STATES, 1910-46

INDEX NUMBERS (1935-39 = 100)



\$2.44 a bushel, 45 cents more than in mid-February.

The big jumps in the prices of these two products accounted for a large share of the sharp price rise of all farm products in March. The advances in the prices of meat animals and grains accounted for two-thirds of the total rise.

Other sharp price advances from February to March were for: beef cattle at a new high of \$18.50, a \$1.20 jump—rye at a new high of \$2.81, a 48-cent boost—corn at \$1.50 and sorghums at \$2.57 (per 100 lbs.), both more than a 25-cent increase—cotton at 31.89 cents a pound, a 1.33-cent rise—oranges at \$1.36 a box, a 44-cent advance.

Average prices received by farmers in mid-March were 7 percent higher than in February, and 3 percent above the previous peak of last October.

But farmers paid more for things they use in production and family living. Heading the list was the sharp rise in feed prices. After six months of declines, feed prices jumped an average of 11 percent from February to March to within 9 percent of the August peak. Prices of building materials, particularly lumber, continued to advance sharply. Farmers, buying a lot of seeds at this season, paid record prices for many of them. And wholesale prices for farm machinery were about a fifth higher than in March 1946.

Prices of things used in farm homes continued upward. The greater part of the general rise in March was the significant advance in food prices. This upturn was in contrast to the previous three months of steady or slightly declining food prices for farmers. Prices for materials used in building and repairing farm houses advanced further, while those for furniture, furnishings, and household supplies increased moderately. However, there was a bright spot in the picture. For the first time in 13 months—since February 1946—clothing prices as a group did not go up.

The average of all prices paid by farmers reached a new high in mid-March, 4 percent above mid-February and 27 percent above March 1946. This advance continued to push up parity prices of all major farm commodities except milk and eggs whose parity prices

are adjusted for seasonal variation. Despite the higher prices farmers had to pay, they were in general better off than in February. In March farmers were receiving 122 percent of parity, in February 119. For nearly all commodities the prices farmers actually received were farther above the parity prices than in February (or closer to parity prices if less than parity).

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